MARVEL
FORTNIGHTLY
20th Sept.–3rd Oct. 1984 №1 25p

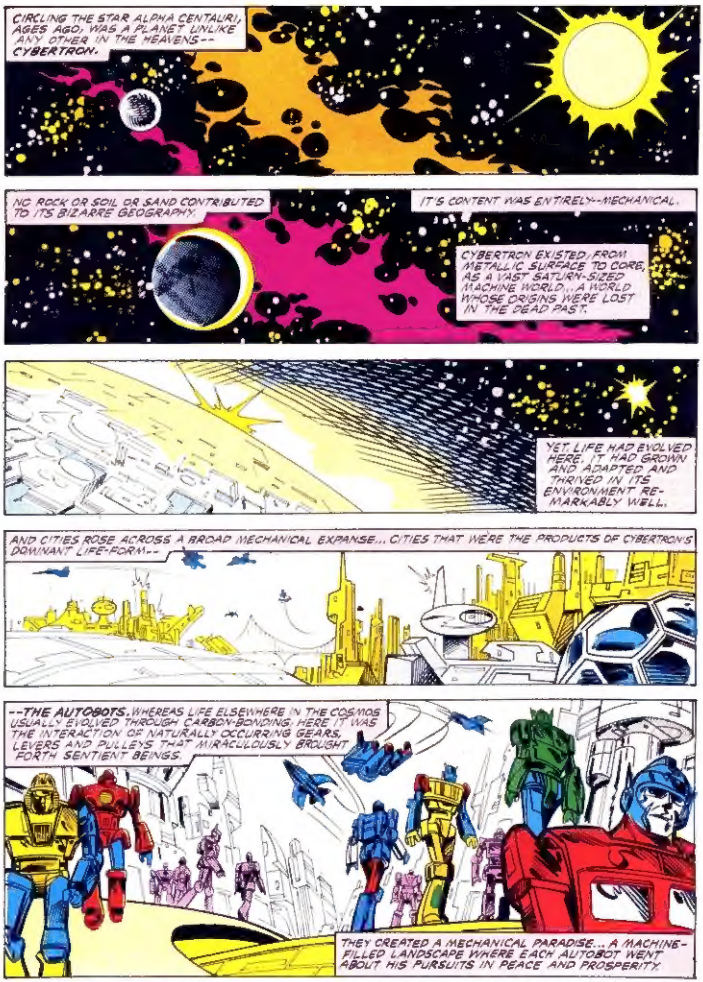
GREAT COMPETITION 25 FANTASTIC TRANSFORMER PRIZES!

THE TRANSFORMERS

HEROIC AUTOBOT

WARRIOR ROBOTS IN DISGUISE

FREE
Action
TRANSFERS
INSIDE!
ROBOT INVADERS!
THEY'RE EVIL MACHINES FROM ANOTHER WORLD! THEY WANT OUR PLANET! HOW CAN THE AUTOBOTS SAVE US? THE FIGHT BEGINS INSIDE.
ALSO INSIDE: POSTER PLUS...
ACTION! ADVENTURE! FEATURES!


CIRCLING THE STAR ALPHA CENTAURI, AGES AGO, WAS A PLANET UNLIKE ANY OTHER IN THE HEAVENS--CYBERTRON.
NO ROCK OR SOIL OR SAND CONTRIBUTED TO ITS BIZARRE GEOGRAPHY.
IT'S CONTENT WAS ENTIRELY--MECHANICAL.
CYBERTRON EXISTED, FROM METALLIC SURFACE TO CORE, AS A VAST SATURN-SIZED MACHINE WORLD... A WORLD WHOSE ORIGINS WERE LOST IN THE DEAD PAST.
YET LIFE HAD EVOLVED HERE... IT HAD GROWN AND ADAPTED AND THRIVED IN ITS ENVIRONMENT REMARKABLY WELL.
AND CITIES ROSE ACROSS A BROAD MECHANICAL EXPANSE... CITIES THAT WERE THE PRODUCTS OF CYBERTRON'S DOMINANT LIFE-FORM--
--THE AUTOBOTS. WHEREAS LIFE ELSEWHERE IN THE COSMOS USUALLY EVOLVED THROUGH CARBON-BONDING, HERE IT WAS THE INTERACTION OF NATURALLY OCCURRING GEARS, LEVERS AND PULLEYS THAT MIRACULOUSLY BROUGHT FORTH SENTIENT BEINGS.
THEY CREATED A MECHANICAL PARADISE... A MACHINE-FILLED LANDSCAPE WHERE EACH AUTOBOT WENT ABOUT HIS PURSUITS IN PEACE AND PROSPERITY.

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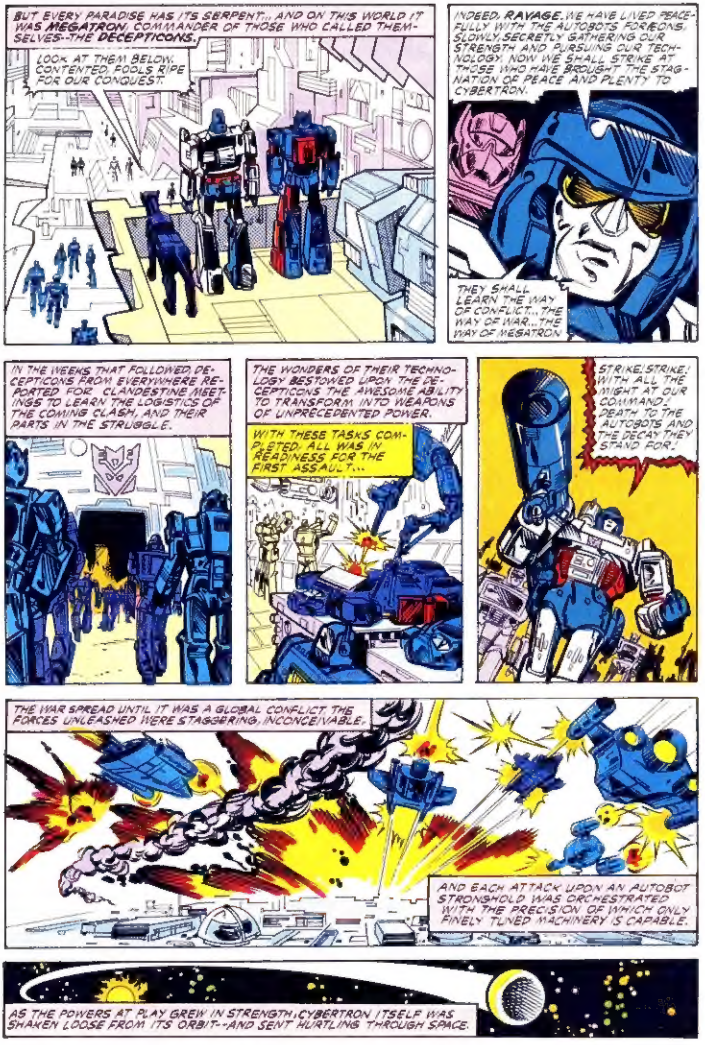
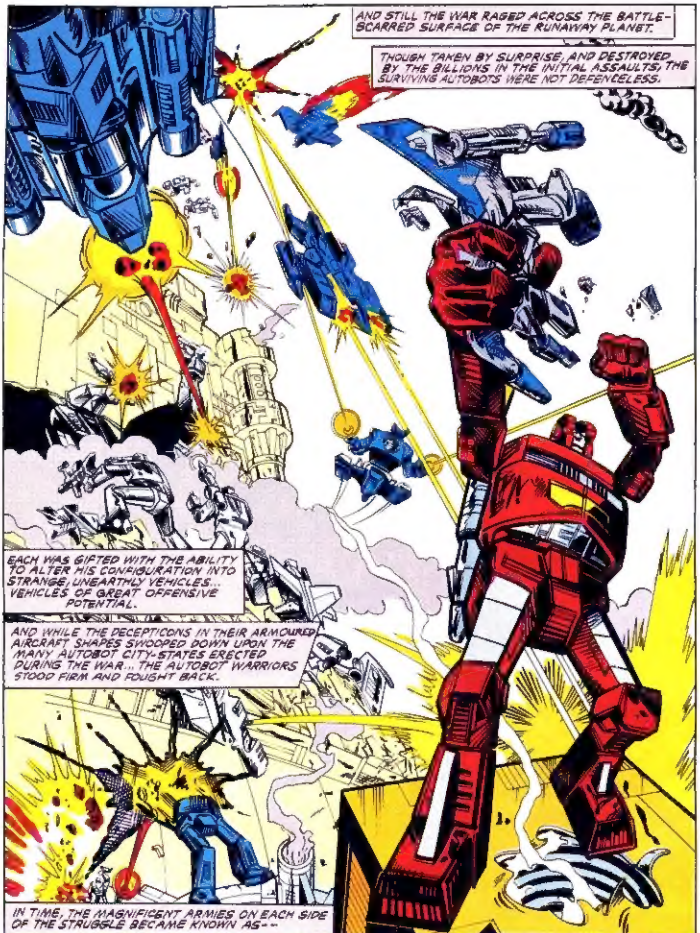
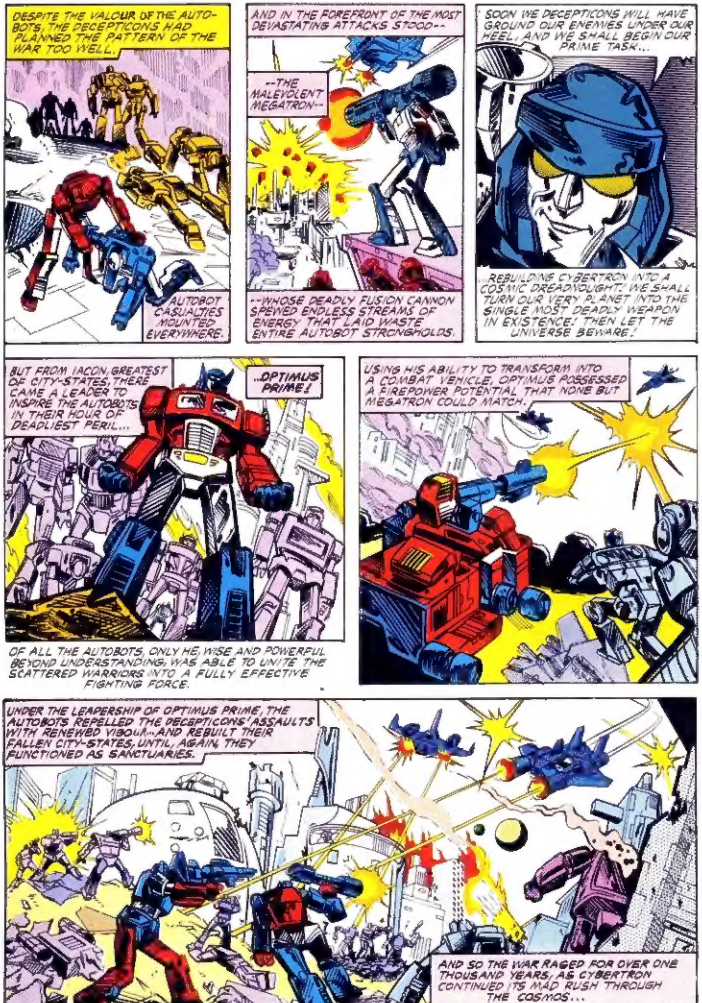
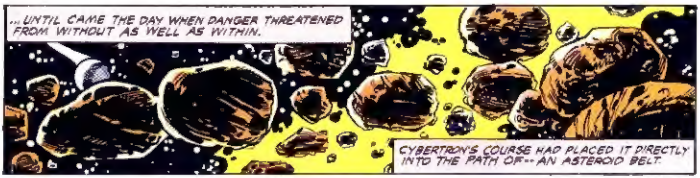

BUT EVERY PARADISE HAS ITS SERPENT... AND ON THIS WORLD IT WAS MEGATRON, COMMANDER OF THOSE WHO CALLED THEMSELVES--THE DECEPTICONS.
LOOK AT THEM BELOW, CONTENTED FOOLS RIPE FOR OUR CONQUEST.
INDEED, RAVAGE. WE HAVE LIVED PEACEFULLY WITH THE AUTOBOTS FOR EONS, SLOWLY, SECRETLY GATHERING OUR STRENGTH AND PURSUING OUR TECHNOLOGY. NOW WE SHALL STRIKE AT THOSE WHO HAVE BROUGHT THE STAGNATION OF PEACE AND PLENTY TO CYBERTRON.
THEY SHALL LEARN THE WAY OF CONFLICT... THE WAY OF WAR... THE WAY OF MEGATRON.
IN THE WEEKS THAT FOLLOWED, DECEPTICONS FROM EVERYWHERE REPORTED TO CLESTINE SHEET-INGS TO LEARN THE LOGISTICS OF THE COMING CLASH, AND THEIR PARTS IN THE STRUGGLE.
THE WONDERS OF THEIR TECHNOLOGY BESTOWED UPON THE DECEPTICONS THE AWESOME ABILITY TO TRANSFORM INTO WEAPONS OF UNPRECEDENTED POWER.
WITH THESE TASKS COMPLETED, ALL WAS IN READINESS FOR THE FIRST ASSAULT...
STRIKE! STRIKE! WITH ALL THE MIGHT AT OUR COMMAND! DEATH TO THE AUTOBOTS AND THE DECAY THEY STAND FOR!
THE WAR SPREAD UNTIL IT WAS A GLOBAL CONFLICT. THE FORCES UNLEASHED WERE STAGGERING, INCONCEIVABLE.
AND EACH ATTACK UPON AN AUTOBOT STRONGHOLD WAS ORCHESTRATED WITH THE PRECISION OF WHICH ONLY FINELY TUNED MACHINERY IS CAPABLE.
AS THE POWERS AT PLAY GREW IN STRENGTH, CYBERTRON ITSELF WAS SHAKEN LOOSE FROM ITS ORBIT--AND SENT HURTLING THROUGH SPACE.

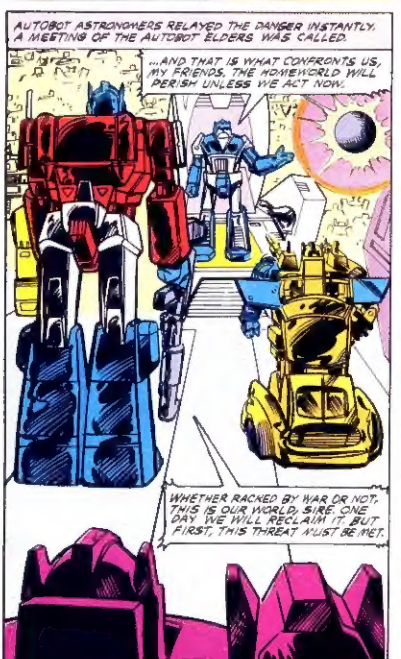

AND STILL THE WAR RAGED ACROSS THE BATTLE-SCARRED SURFACE OF THE RUNAWAY PLANET.
THOUGH TAKEN BY SURPRISE, AND DESTROYED BY THE BILLIONS IN THE INITIAL ASSAULTS; THE SURVIVING AUTOBOTS WERE NOT DEFENCELESS.
EACH WAS GIFTED WITH THE ABILITY TO ALTER HIS CONFIGURATION INTO STRANGE, UNEARTHLY VEHICLES... VEHICLES OF GREAT OFFENSIVE POTENTIAL.
AND WHILE THE DECEPTICONS IN THEIR ARMOURED AIRCRAFT SHAPES SWOOPED DOWN UPON THE MANY AUTOBOT CITY-STATES ERECTED DURING THE WAR... THE AUTOBOT WARRIORS STOOD FIRM AND FOUGHT BACK.
IN TIME, THE MAGNIFICENT ARMIES ON EACH SIDE OF THE STRUGGLE BECAME KNOWN AS--

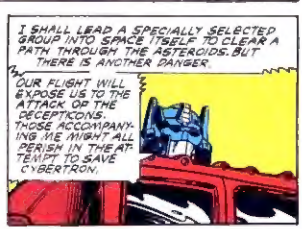
THE TRANSFORMERS™

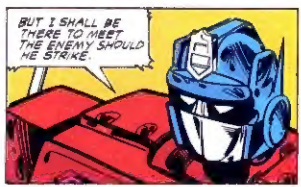
BILL MANTLO	RALPH MACCHIO	FRANK SPRINGER	KIM DeMULDER	HIGGINS & PARKER	NELSON YOMTOV	BOB BUDIANSKY	JIM SHOOTER
PLOT	SCRIPT	PENCILS	INKS	LETTERING	COLOURS	EDITOR	EDITOR IN CHIEF

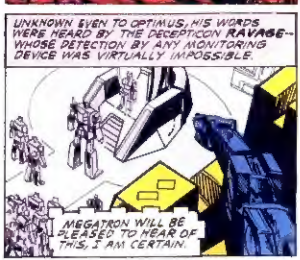

DESPITE THE VALOUR OF THE AUTOBOTS, THE DECEPTICONS HAD PLANNED THE PATTERN OF THE WAR TOO WELL.
AUTOBOT CASUALTIES MOUNTED EVERYWHERE.
AND IN THE FOREFRONT OF THE MOST DEVASTATING ATTACKS STOOD--
--THE MALEVOLENT MEGATRON--
--WHOSE DEADLY FUSION CANNON SPEWED ENDLESS STREAMS OF ENERGY THAT LAID WASTE ENTIRE AUTOBOT STRONGHOLDS.
SOON WE DECEPTICONS WILL HAVE GROUND OUR ENEMIES UNDER OUR HEEL. AND WE SHALL BEGIN OUR PRIME TASK...
REBUILDING CYBERTRON INTO A COSMIC DREADNOUGHT! WE SHALL TURN OUR VERY PLANET INTO THE SINGLE MOST DEADLY WEAPON IN EXISTENCE! THEN LET THE UNIVERSE BEWARE!
BUT FROM IACON, GREATEST OF CITY-STATES, THERE CAME A LEADER TO INSPIRE THE AUTOBOTS IN THEIR HOUR OF DEADLIEST PERIL...
..OPTIMUS PRIME!
OF ALL THE AUTOBOTS, ONLY HE, WISE AND POWERFUL BEYOND UNDERSTANDING, WAS ABLE TO UNITE THE SCATTERED WARRIORS INTO A FULLY EFFECTIVE FIGHTING FORCE.
USING HIS ABILITY TO TRANSFORM INTO A COMBAT VEHICLE, OPTIMUS POSSESSED A FIREPOWER POTENTIAL THAT NONE BUT MEGATRON COULD MATCH.
UNDER THE LEADERSHIP OF OPTIMUS PRIME, THE AUTOBOTS REPELLED THE DECEPTICONS' ASSAULTS WITH RENEWED VIGOUR...AND REBUILT THEIR FALLEN CITY-STATES, UNTIL, AGAIN, THEY FUNCTIONED AS SANCTUARIES.
AND SO THE WAR RAGED FOR OVER ONE THOUSAND YEARS, AS CYBERTRON CONTINUED ITS MAD RUSH THROUGH THE COSMOS...

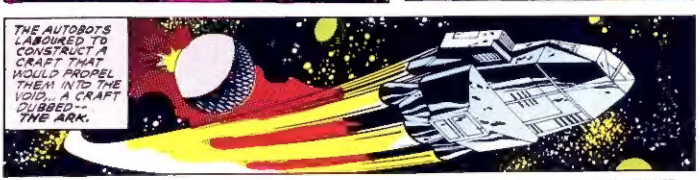

...UNTIL CAME THE DAY WHEN DANGER THREATENED FROM WITHOUT AS WELL AS WITHIN.
CYBERTRON'S COURSE HAD PLACED IT DIRECTLY INTO THE PATH OF-- AN ASTEROID BELT.


AUTOBOT ASTRONOMERS RELAYED THE DANGER INSTANTLY. A MEETING OF THE AUTOBOT ELDERS WAS CALLED.
...AND THAT IS WHAT CONFRONTS US, MY FRIENDS. THE HOMEWORLD WILL PERISH UNLESS WE ACT NOW.
WHETHER RACKED BY WAR OR NOT, THIS IS OUR WORLD, SIRE. ONE DAY WE WILL RECLAIM IT. BUT FIRST, THIS THREAT MUST BE MET.

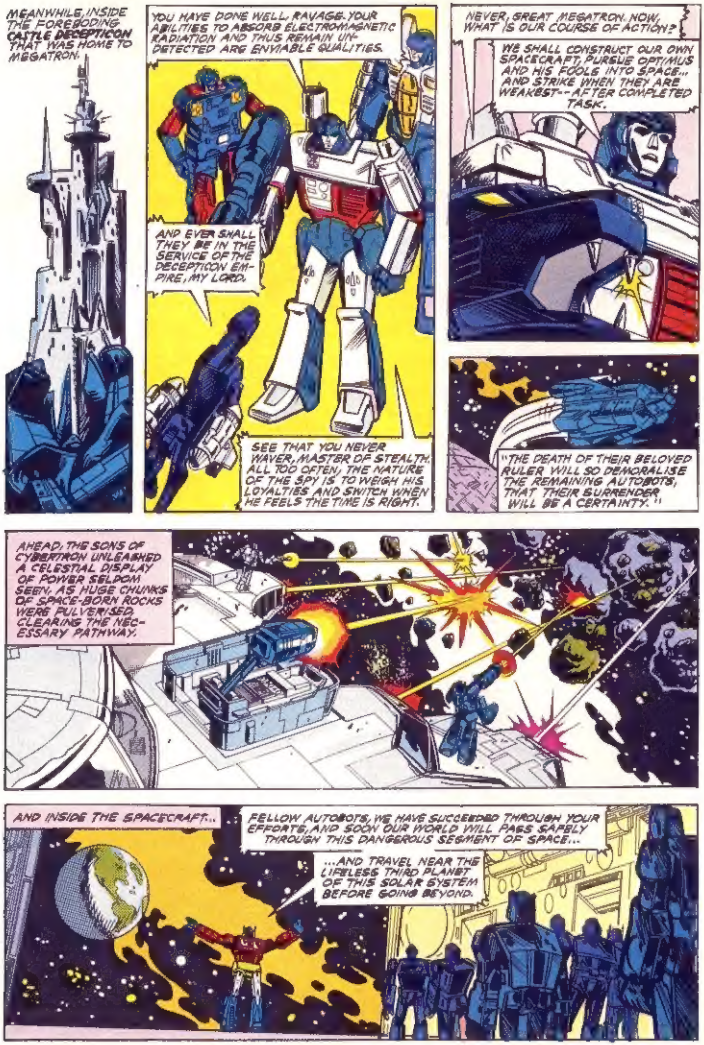

I SHALL LEAD A SPECIALLY SELECTED GROUP INTO SPACE ITSELF TO CLEAR A PATH THROUGH THE ASTEROIDS. BUT THERE IS ANOTHER DANGER.
OUR FLIGHT WILL EXPOSE US TO THE ATTACK OF THE DECEPTICONS. THOSE ACCOMPANYING ME MIGHT ALL PERISH IN THE ATTEMPT TO SAVE CYBERTRON.

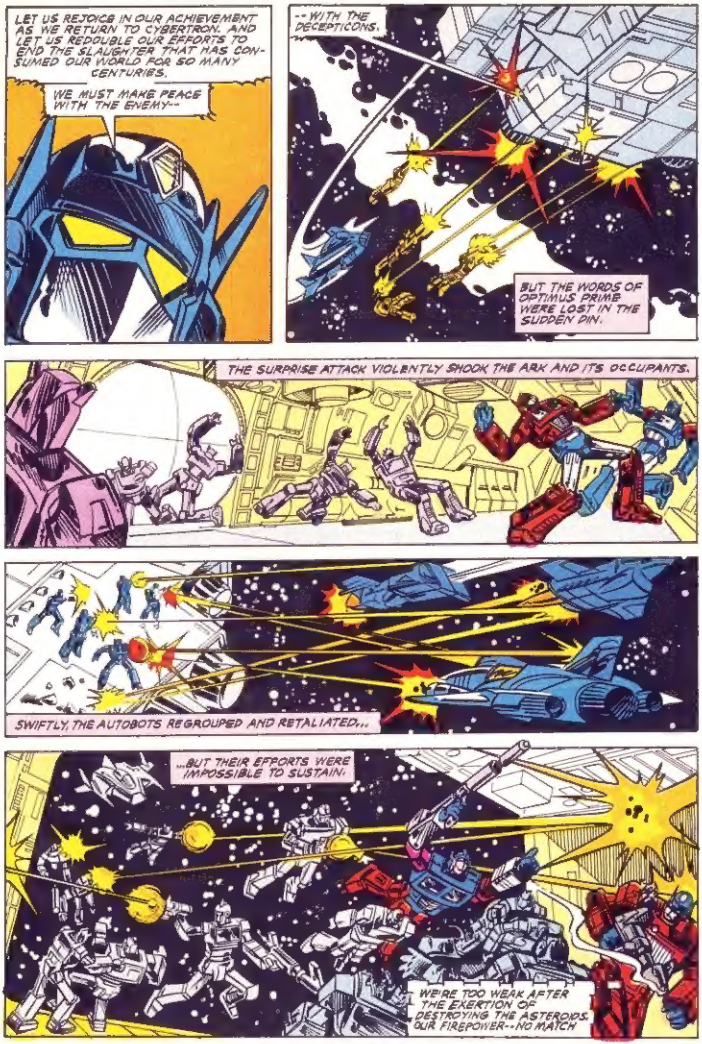

BUT I SHALL BE THERE TO MEET THE ENEMY SHOULD HE STRIKE.


UNKNOWN EVEN TO OPTIMUS, HIS WORDS WERE HEARD BY THE DECEPTICON RAVAGE-- WHOSE DETECTION BY ANY MONITORING DEVICE WAS VIRTUALLY IMPOSSIBLE.
MEGATRON WILL BE PLEASED TO HEAR OF THIS, I AM CERTAIN.

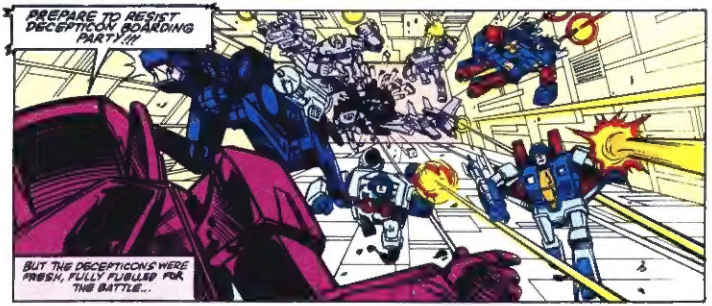

THE AUTOBOTS LABOURED TO CONSTRUCT A CRAFT THAT WOULD PROPEL THEM INTO THE VOID... A CRAFT DUBBED-- THE ARK.

CONTINUED...


MEANWHILE, INSIDE THE FOREBODING CATTLE DESEPTICON THAT WAS HOME TO MEGATRON...
YOU HAVE DONE WELL, RAVAGE. YOUR ABILITIES TO ABSORB ELECTROMAGNETIC RADIATION AND THUS REMAIN UNDETECTED ARE ENVIABLE QUALITIES.
AND EVER SHALL THEY BE IN THE SERVICE OF THE DESEPTICON EMPIRE, MY LORD.
SEE THAT YOU NEVER WAVER, MASTER OF STEALTH. ALL TOO OFTEN, THE NATURE OF THE SPY IS TO WEIGH HIS LOYALTIES AND SWITCH WHEN HE FEELS THE TIME IS RIGHT.
NEVER, GREAT MEGATRON. NOW, WHAT IS OUR COURSE OF ACTION?
WE SHALL CONSTRUCT OUR OWN SPACECRAFT, PURSUE OPTIMUS AND HIS FOOLS INTO SPACE... AND STRIKE WHEN THEY ARE WEAKEST--AFTER COMPLETED TASK.
"THE DEATH OF THEIR BELOVED RULER WILL SO DEMORALISE THE REMAINING AUTOBOTS, THAT THEIR SURRENDER WILL BE A CERTAINTY."
AHEAD, THE SONS OF CYBERTRON UNLEASHED A CELESTIAL DISPLAY OF POWER SELDOM SEEN. AS HUGE CHUNKS OF SPACE-BORN ROCKS WERE PULVERISED, CLEARING THE NECESSARY PATHWAY.
AND INSIDE THE SPACECRAFT...
FELLOW AUTOBOTS, WE HAVE SUCCEEDED THROUGH YOUR EFFORTS, AND SOON OUR WORLD WILL PASS SAFELY THROUGH THIS DANGEROUS SEGMENT OF SPACE...
...AND TRAVEL NEAR THE LIFELESS THIRD PLANET OF THIS SOLAR SYSTEM BEFORE GOING BEYOND.

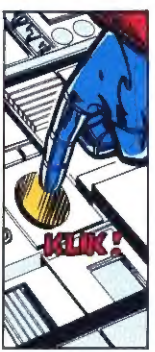

LET US REJOICE IN OUR ACHIEVEMENT AS WE RETURN TO CYBERTRON, AND LET US REDOUBLE OUR EFFORTS TO END THE SLAUGHTER THAT HAS CONSUMED OUR WORLD FOR SO MANY CENTURIES.
WE MUST MAKE PEACE WITH THE ENEMY--
--WITH THE DECEPTICONS.
BUT THE WORDS OF OPTIMUS PRIME WERE LOST IN THE SUDDEN DIN.
THE SURPRISE ATTACK VIOLENTLY SHOOK THE ARK AND ITS OCCUPANTS.
SWIFTLY, THE AUTOBOTS REGROUPED AND RETALIATED...
...BUT THEIR EFFORTS WERE IMPOSSIBLE TO SUSTAIN.
WE'RE TOO WEAK AFTER THE EXERTION OF DESTROYING THE ASTEROIDS. OUR FIREPOWER--NO MATCH

EVEN THE SAFETY OF THE ARK WAS INSUFFICIENT.
OUR HULL IS BREACHED.
SHROOM!

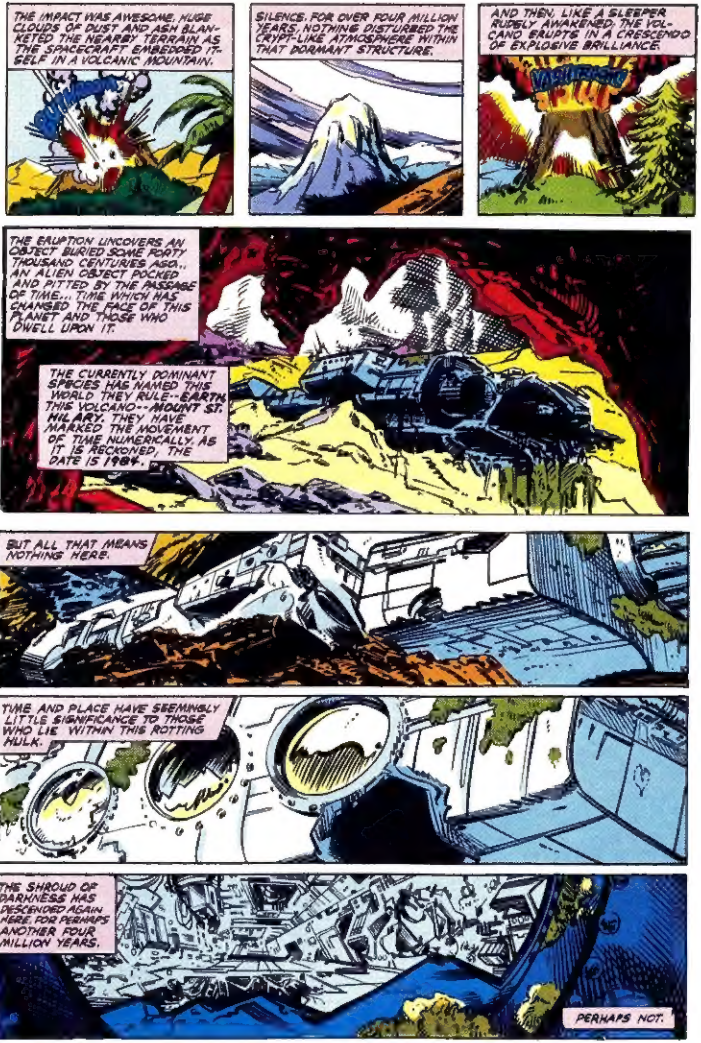

PREPARE TO RESIST DECEPTICON BOARDING PARTY!!!
BUT THE DECEPTICONS WERE FRESH, FULLY FUELLED FOR THIS BATTLE...

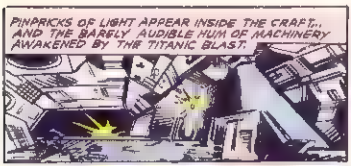
... AND THE ENNERVATED AUTOBOTS WERE CUT DOWN WHERE THEY STOOD!

MY COMPUTATIONS SHOW DEFEAT IS IMMINENT -- WITHIN 5.7 MINUTES. OPTIONAL COURSES OF ACTION INCLUDE--
WE HAVE BUT ONE COURSE OPEN TO US, PROWL, MOST TRUSTED OF MY ADVISORS.


KLIK!

I HAD ANTICIPATED SUCH A MOVE BY THE DECEPTICONS. THE ARK AND ITS SECRETS MUST NEVER FALL INTO ENEMY HANDS, SO I PLOTTED AN ALTERNATE COURSE THAT WOULD TAKE US ON A SUICIDAL HEADING...
...DIRECTLY INTO THE THIRD PLANET OF THIS SOLAR SYSTEM--FAREWELL, MY FRIEND, THOUGH WE DIE, AT LEAST OUR ENEMIES ARE TAKEN WITH US.


THE IMPACT WAS AWESOME. HUGE CLOUDS OF DUST AND ASH BLANKETED THE NEARBY TERRAIN AS THE SPACECRAFT EMBEDDED ITSELF IN A VOLCANIC MOUNTAIN.
SILENCE. FOR OVER FOUR MILLION YEARS, NOTHING DISTURBED THE CRYPT-LIKE ATMOSPHERE WITHIN THAT DORMANT STRUCTURE.
AND THEN, LIKE A SLEEPER RUDELY AWAKENED, THE VOLCANO ERUPTS IN A CRESCENDO OF EXPLOSIVE BRILLIANCE.
THE EAUPTION UNCOVERS AN OBJECT BURIED SOME FORTY THOUSAND CENTURIES AGO... AN ALIEN OBJECT POCKED AND PITTED BY THE PASSAGE OF TIME... TIME WHICH HAS CHANGED THE FACE OF THIS PLANET AND THOSE WHO DWELL UPON IT.
THE CURRENTLY DOMINANT SPECIES HAS NAMED THIS WORLD THEY RULE--EARTH. THIS VOLCANO--MOUNT ST. HILARY. THEY HAVE MARKED THE MOVEMENT OF TIME NUMERICALLY, AS IT IS RECKONED, THE DATE IS 1984.
BUT ALL THAT MEANS NOTHING HERE.
TIME AND PLACE HAVE SEEMINGLY LITTLE SIGNIFICANCE TO THOSE WHO LIE WITHIN THIS ROTTING HULK.
THE SHROUD OF DARKNESS HAS DESCENDED AGAIN HERE FOR PERHAPS ANOTHER FOUR MILLION YEARS.
PERHAPS NOT.


PINPRICKS OF LIGHT APPEAR INSIDE THE CRAFT... AND THE BARELY AUDIBLE HUM OF MACHINERY AWAKENED BY THE TITANIC BLAST.

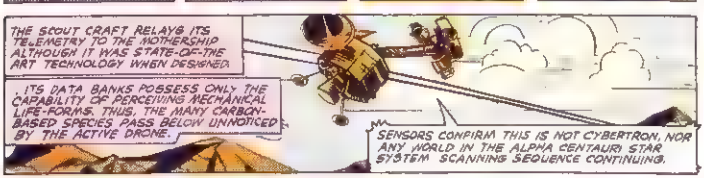
BEACONS FLARE, PROBING THE DARKNESS, ILLUMINATING THE DANK CAVERNOUS WALLS

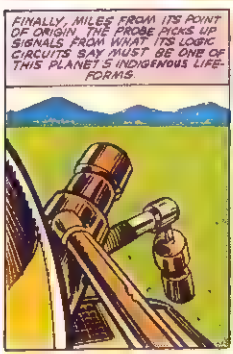
IN THE SIDE OF THE GREAT SHIP A HATCH THAT HAS REMAINED CLOSED FOR MILLENNIA NOW OPENS.

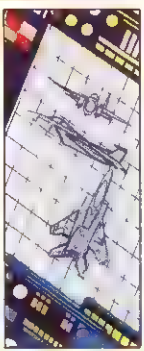
FROM IT A DEVICE IS LAUNCHED FORTH

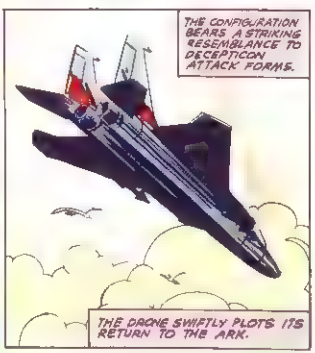
IT IS A SENSOR DRONE

ITS MISSION -- GATHER DATA FOR TRANSMISSION BACK TO THE ARK


THE SCOUT CRAFT RELAYS ITS TELEMETRY TO THE MOTHERSHIP ALTHOUGH IT WAS STATE-OF-THE ART TECHNOLOGY WHEN DESIGNED
ITS DATA BANKS POSSESS ONLY THE CAPABILITY OF PERCEIVING MECHANICAL LIFE-FORMS. THUS, THE MANY CARBON-BASED SPECIES PASS BELOW UNNOTICED BY THE ACTIVE DRONE.
SENSORS CONFIRM THIS IS NOT CYBERTRON, NOR ANY WORLD IN THE ALPHA CENTAURI STAR SYSTEM. SCANNING SEQUENCE CONTINUING.


FINALLY, MILES FROM ITS POINT OF ORIGIN, THE PROBE PICKS UP SIGNALS FROM WHAT ITS LOGIC CIRCUITS SAY MUST BE ONE OF THIS PLANET'S INDIGENOUS LIFE-FORMS.




THE CONFIGURATION BEARS A STRIKING RESEMBLANCE TO DECEPTICON ATTACK FORMS.
THE DRONE SWIFTLY PLOTS ITS RETURN TO THE ARK.

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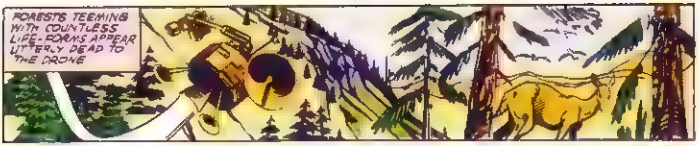
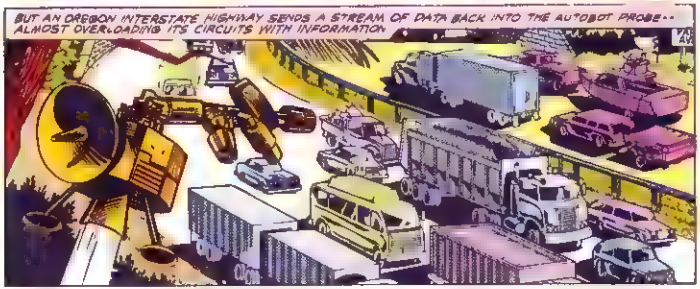
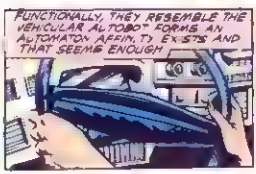
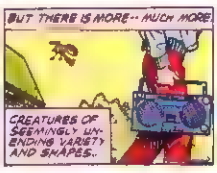
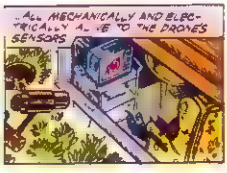
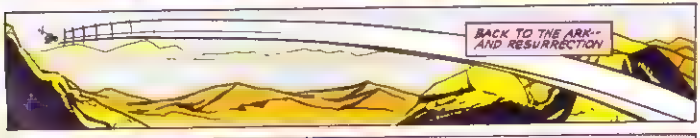


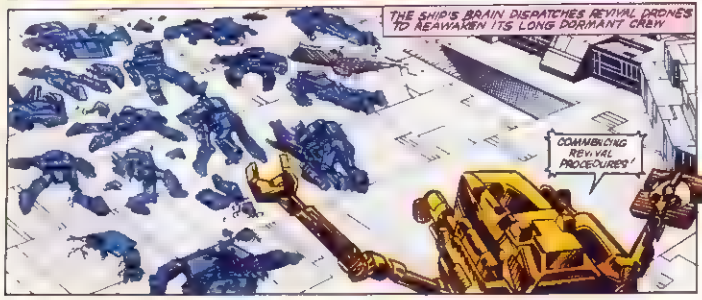

BUT AN OREGON INTERSTATE HIGHWAY SENDS A STREAM OF DATA BACK INTO THE AUTOBOT PROBE-- ALMOST OVERLOADING ITS CIRCUITS WITH INFORMATION











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FANTASTIC COMPETITION WIN A TRANSFORMER DECEPTICON PLANE!

THE TRANSFORMERS

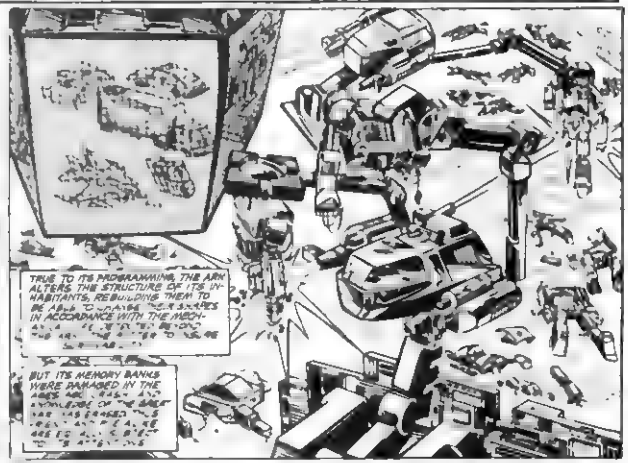
HEROIC AUTOBOT

WARRIOR ROBOTS IN DISGUISE

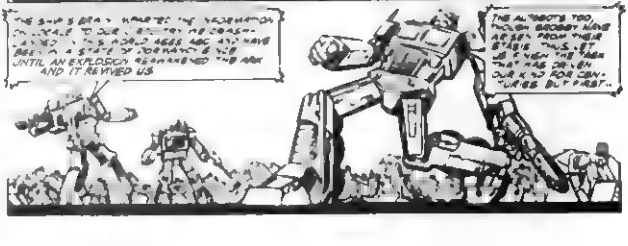
FREE Action TRANSFERS INSIDE!

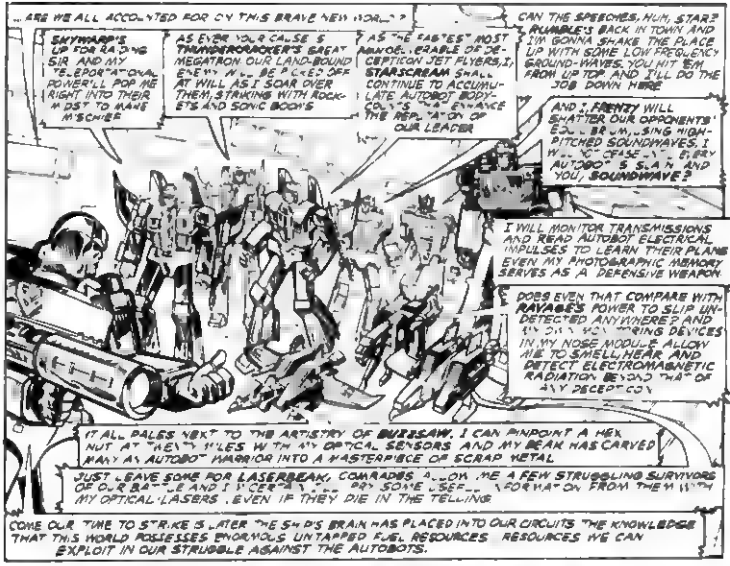
TRANSFORMERS

THE STORY SO FAR. Four million years ago, they came from Cybertron, a world composed entirely of machinery — a world torn by an age-old war between the heroic **Autobots** and the evil **Decepticons.** These incredibly powerful living robots have brought their conflict to planet Earth in a crashed spaced ship. Having lain unactivated for millions of years, they are now about to be revived

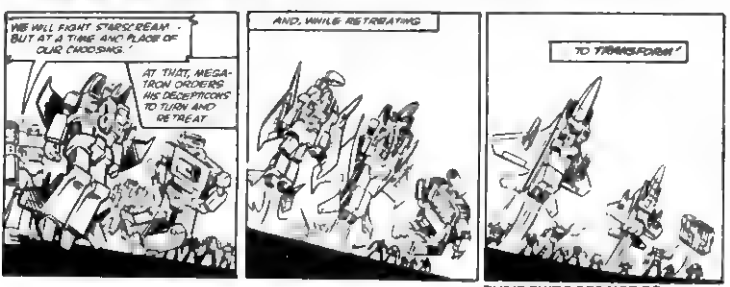

TRUE TO ITS PROGRAMMING, THE ARK ALTERS THE STRUCTURE OF ITS INHABITANTS, REBUILDING THEM TO BE ABLE TO ADAPT TO EARTH'S ATMOSPHERE IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE MECHANICAL [illegible]
BUT ITS MEMORY BANKS WERE DAMAGED IN THE CRASH AND [illegible]

THE ARK'S AUTOBOTS ARE SLOW THAT THE BASIC NATURE OF EACH ROBOT IS PRESERVED. THE AUTOBOTS ARE REARMED WITH EARTH VEHICLES. THE DECEPTICONS WILL RESEMBLE EARTH WEAPONS AND COMMUNICATIONS DEVICES
80% FACTIONS IS NECESSARY CAN REVERT TO THEIR ORIGINAL ROBOTIC FORMS
MEGATRON, WHAT HAS HAPPENED? WHERE ARE WE?

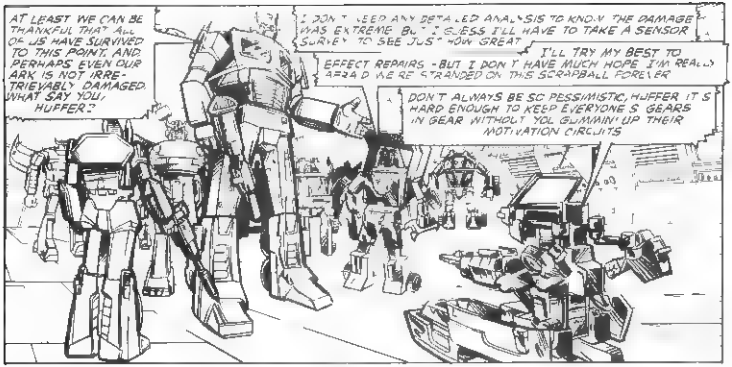

THE SHIP'S BRAIN, WHERE THE INFORMATION ON HOW TO BUILD THE CREATURES AND THE AUTOBOTS WERE ARE AND HAVE BEEN IN A STATE OF DORMANCY & INACTIVITY UNTIL AN EXPLOSION REARRANGED THE ARK AND IT REVIVED US
THE AUTOBOTS TOO HAVE BECOME MORE ADEPT FROM THEIR BATTLES. THUS, IT WAS THE TASK THAT HAS DRIVEN OUR KIND FOR CENTURIES BUT FIRST...


...ARE WE ALL ACCOUNTED FOR ON THIS BRAVE NEW WORLD?
SKYWARP'S UP FOR RAIDING SIR AND MY TELEPORTATIONAL POWER'LL POP ME RIGHT INTO THEIR MIDST TO MAKE MISCHIEF
AS EVER YOUR CAUSE IS THUNDERCRACKER'S GREAT MEGATRON OUR LAND-BOUND BRETHREN WILL BE PICKED OFF AT WILL AS I SCAR OVER THEM, STRIKING WITH ROCKETS AND SONIC BOOMS
AS THE "CASES" MOST MINOR-GRABLE OF DECEPTICON JET FLYERS, I, STARSCREAM SHALL CONTINUE TO ACCUMULATE AUTOBOT BODY-COUNTS TO ENHANCE THE REPUTATION OF OUR LEADER
CAN THE SPEECHES, HUH, STARS? RUMBLE'S BACK IN TOWN AND I'M GONNA SHAKE THE PLACE UP WITH SOME LOW FREQUENCY GROUND-WAVES. YOU HIT 'EM FROM UP TOP AND I'LL DO THE JOB DOWN HERE
AND I, FRENZY WILL SHATTER OUR OPPONENTS' EAR-DRUMS USING HIGH-PITCHED SOUNDWAVES. I WILL CEASE ONLY AUTOBOT SLAG AND YOU, SOUNDWAVE?
I WILL MONITOR TRANSMISSIONS AND READ AUTOBOT ELECTRICAL IMPULSES TO LEARN THEIR PLANS. EVEN MY PHOTOGRAPHIC MEMORY SERVES AS A DEFENSIVE WEAPON
DOES EVEN THAT COMPARE WITH RAVAGE'S POWER TO SLIP UNDETECTED ANYWHERE? AND MY OWN HOMING DEVICES IN MY NOSE MODULE ALLOW ME TO SMELL, HEAR AND DETECT ELECTROMAGNETIC RADIATION BEYOND THAT OF ANY DECEPTICON
IT ALL PALES NEXT TO THE ARTISTRY OF BUZZSAW. I CAN PINPOINT A HEX NUT AT HALF A MILES WITH MY OPTICAL SENSORS AND MY BEAM HAS CARVED MANY AN AUTOBOT WARRIOR INTO A MASTERPIECE OF SCRAP METAL
JUST LEAVE SOME FOR LASERBEAK, COMRADES ALLOW ME A FEW STRUGGLING SURVIVORS OF OUR BATTLE AND I SHALL PERSONALLY SOME USEFUL INFORMATION FROM THEM WITH MY OPTICAL LASERS. EVEN IF THEY DIE IN THE TELLING
COME OUR TIME TO STRIKE IS LATER. THE SHIP'S BRAIN HAS PLACED INTO OUR CIRCUITS THE KNOWLEDGE THAT THIS WORLD POSSESSES ENORMOUS UNTAPPED FUEL RESOURCES. RESOURCES WE CAN EXPLOIT IN OUR STRUGGLE AGAINST THE AUTOBOTS.

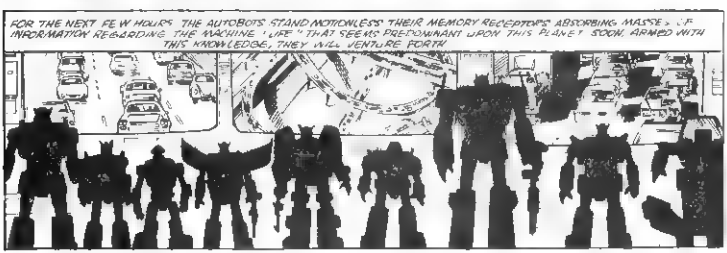
WHY NOT STRIKE NOW MY LEADER? END THE AUTOBOT THREAT AND THE WORLD IS OURS FOR THE TAKING. THAT FLAWED LOGIC PERSUADES YOU OTHERWISE?
SOUND. WILL PERSUADE ME WE ARE STILL WEAK OURSELVES. AND FEW IN NUMBER. ONE OF OUR MIGHTIEST IS MISSING. OUR FUEL SOURCES UNCERTAIN. SHOULD OUR ATTACK FAIL, THE MIGHT OF OPTIMUS COULD WELL DECIDE THE OUTCOME. NO. WE LEAVE.


WE WILL FIGHT STARSCREAM - BUT AT A TIME AND PLACE OF OUR CHOOSING.
AT THAT, MEGATRON ORDERS HIS DECEPTICONS TO TURN AND RETREAT
AND, WHILE RETREATING
TO TRANSFORM!

THEIR EXIT DOES NOT GO UNNOTICED


AT LEAST WE CAN BE THANKFUL THAT ALL OF US HAVE SURVIVED TO THIS POINT, AND PERHAPS EVEN OUR ARK IS NOT IRRETRIEVABLY DAMAGED. WHAT SAY YOU, HUFFER?
I DON'T NEED ANY DETAILED ANALYSIS TO KNOW THE DAMAGE WAS EXTREME. BUT I GUESS I'LL HAVE TO TAKE A SENSOR SURVEY TO SEE JUST HOW GREAT.
I'LL TRY MY BEST TO EFFECT REPAIRS. - BUT I DON'T HAVE MUCH HOPE I'M REALLY AFRAID WE'RE STRANDED ON THIS SCRAPBALL FOREVER.
DON'T ALWAYS BE SO PESSIMISTIC, HUFFER. IT'S HARD ENOUGH TO KEEP EVERYONE'S GEARS IN GEAR WITHOUT YOU GLOMMIN' UP THEIR MOTIVATION CIRCUITS

MY COMRADES, WE MUST ACCEPT THE SAD TRUTH THAT CYBERTRON MAY NO LONGER EVEN EXIST. BUT IF IT DOES -- I SWEAR AS LEADER OF THE AUTOBOTS, I SHALL RETURN US THERE SOME DAY.
BUT OUR IMMEDIATE CONCERN MUST BE THE REPAIR OF THE ARK. AND THE LEARNING OF ALL WE CAN ABOUT THIS ALIEN WORLD WHERE FATE HAS CAST US.
LET AUNTY TRANSMIT SIGNALS SHE'S RECEIVING FROM ACROSS THIS WORLD AND PLACE THEM ON THE MONITOR SCREENS, THAT WE MAY PARTAKE OF KNOWLEDGE - OUR GREATEST WEAPON.


FOR THE NEXT FEW HOURS, THE AUTOBOTS STAND MOTIONLESS, THEIR MEMORY RECEPTORS ABSORBING MASSES OF INFORMATION REGARDING THE MACHINE "LIFE" THAT SEEMS PREDOMINANT UPON THIS PLANET. SOON, ARMED WITH THIS KNOWLEDGE, THEY WILL VENTURE FORTH!

LIFE... THE ARK'S SENSORS DID NOT DETECT IT HERE THOSE MILLENIA AGO WHEN WE SOUGHT TO PASS THROUGH THE ASTEROID BELT NEARBY.
AND ALL OF IT UNAWARE OF THE DECEPTICON MENACE IN ITS MIDST. OUR MISSION IS CLEAR. THE RENEGADE DECEPTICONS ARE TO BE FOUND AND DEFEATED. IT IS OUR FAULT THEY ARE HERE. THUS IT IS OUR DUTY TO SEE TO THEIR DOWNFALL.
OPTIMUS, THIS WORLD'S FASCINATING. MY RECONNAISSANCE MISSIONS WILL BE FAR MORE EXCITING THAN MERE LOGISTICS GATHERING.
AGREED, HOUND. BUT, LET US NEVER FORGET OUR PRIMARY PURPOSE - TO SPARE THIS WORLD FROM THE SCOURGE WE HAVE UNWITTINGLY UNLEASHED UPON IT.

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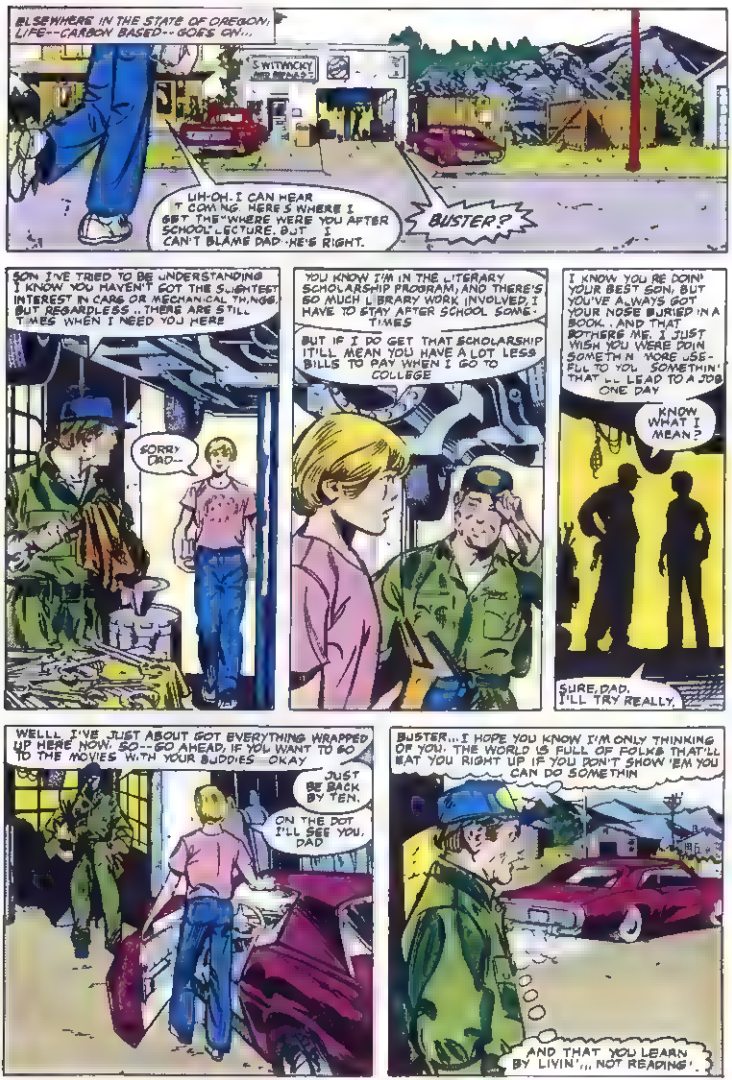
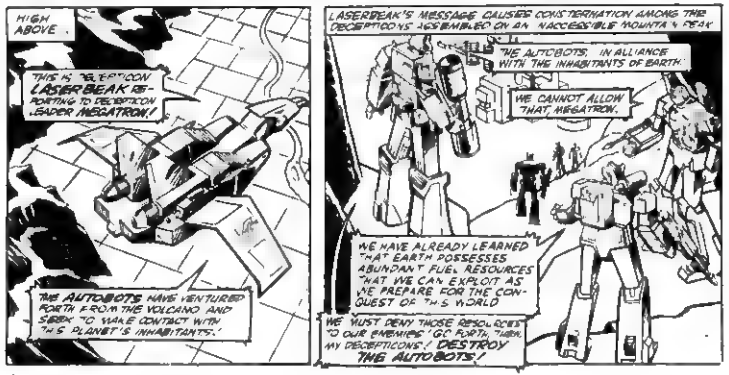

ELSEWHERE IN THE STATE OF OREGON, LIFE--CARBON BASED--GOES ON...
SWITWICKY AUTO REPAIRS
UH-OH. I CAN HEAR IT COMING. HERE'S WHERE I GET THE "WHERE WERE YOU AFTER SCHOOL" LECTURE. BUT I CAN'T BLAME DAD. HE'S RIGHT.
BUSTER?
SON I'VE TRIED TO BE UNDERSTANDING I KNOW YOU HAVEN'T GOT THE SLIGHTEST INTEREST IN CARS OR MECHANICAL THINGS. BUT REGARDLESS...THERE ARE STILL TIMES WHEN I NEED YOU HERE
SORRY DAD--
YOU KNOW I'M IN THE LITERARY SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM, AND THERE'S SO MUCH LIBRARY WORK INVOLVED, I HAVE TO STAY AFTER SCHOOL SOME-TIMES
BUT IF I DO GET THAT SCHOLARSHIP IT'LL MEAN YOU HAVE A LOT LESS BILLS TO PAY WHEN I GO TO COLLEGE
I KNOW YOU'RE DOIN' YOUR BEST SON. BUT YOU'VE ALWAYS GOT YOUR NOSE BURIED IN A BOOK...AND THAT BOTHERS ME. I JUST WISH YOU WERE DOIN SOMETHING MORE USE-FUL TO YOU SOMETHIN' THAT ... LEAD TO A JOB ONE DAY
KNOW WHAT I MEAN?
SURE, DAD. I'LL TRY REALLY.
WELL I'VE JUST ABOUT GOT EVERYTHING WRAPPED UP HERE NOW. SO--GO AHEAD, IF YOU WANT TO GO TO THE MOVIES WITH YOUR BUDDIES OKAY
JUST BE BACK BY TEN.
OH THE DOT I'LL SEE YOU, DAD
BUSTER... I HOPE YOU KNOW I'M ONLY THINKING OF YOU. THE WORLD IS FULL OF FOLKS THAT'LL EAT YOU RIGHT UP IF YOU DON'T SHOW 'EM YOU CAN DO SOMETHIN
AND THAT YOU LEARN BY LIVIN'... NOT READING'.

NOT FAR AWAY, A HITCHHIKER SEEKS A RIDE ON A LONELY HIGHWAY WINDING DOWN THE SIDE OF MT. ST. HILARY.
I'VE HAD MY THUMB OUT ALL DAY AND I AIN'T SEEN A SINGLE CAR!
LOOKS LIKE I MAY BE HOOFING IT ALL THE WAY TO TOWN
VRRRRRRRRR
WHOA MAYBE I SPOKE TOO SOON!
BUT THAT CAN'T BE ONE CAR MAKING ALL THAT NOISE! HECK, IT SOUNDS LIKE THE INDY 500!
VARRRRROOOOM!
HOLY SMOKES! A WHOLE SLEW OF CARS, TRAVELLING AT TOP SPEED! --AND NOBODY'S DRIVING!!!
WELL, PROWL, YOU'RE LEADIN' THIS EXPEDITION--SO WHEN DO I GET TO START THROWIN PUNCHES?
OPTIMUS HAS ASSIGNED US THE TASK OF RECONNAISSANCE, BRAWN. WE ARE TO AVOID HOSTILE CONTACT UNLESS ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY
I'M WITH BRAWN. LET 'EM
STAY IN LINE, CLIFFJUMPER. YOU'LL GET YOUR CHANCE ON MY COMMAND ONLY.
WANNA BET BRAWN, THAT IT'LL BE THE FIRST TO SPOT AN EARTHLING?
UMM...WHAT DO YOU MAKE OF ALL THIS, HOUND? NO BOD-Y NOTICES THINGS LIKE YOU DO. I WISH I HAD HALF YOUR TRACKING TALENTS
I'M TOO BUSY SORTING MY IMPRESSIONS OUT TO GIVE YOU AN OPINION, BUMBLEBEE. BUT I WILL LET YOU KNOW.
PROWL: MY TURRET SCOPE HAS LOCKED ONTO SOME VITAL MACHINE SIGNS... JUST OVER THIS RIDGE
PREPARE FOR CONTACT, AUTOBOTS. DEFENSIVE MODES IF NECESSARY

CONTINUED...

REACHING THE TOP OF THE RISE, THE TRANSFORMED AUTOBOTS SLOWLY TO A STOP. SENSORS SWEEPING THE SCENE BELOW, THEY SCAN AND WHAT IS THEY ARE SCANNING.
IS THAT THEM PRONG? WAVE! WE FOUND THE EARTHLINGS!?
I, I DON'T KNOW, BUMBLEBEE!
THEY LOOK LIKE THE INHABITANTS THE ARK SCANNED!
BUT WHAT WAS THAT GIANT SCREEN? WHAT WERE THEY ALL DOING ASSEMBLED BEFORE IT?
PROBABLY SOME KIND OF RELIGIOUS RITUAL, HOUND!
WHY WOULD MACHINES WORSHIP MOVING PICTURES OF STRANGE OBJECTS?
THE ONLY WAY WE'RE GOING TO FIND OUT, BUMBLEBEE, IS TO ASK!


HIGH ABOVE...
"THIS IS "DEEP" CON LASERBEAK REPORTING TO DECEPTICON LEADER MEGATRON!
THE AUTOBOTS HAVE VENTURED FORTH FROM THE VOLCANO AND SEEM TO MAKE CONTACT WITH THIS PLANET'S INHABITANTS.
LASERBEAK'S MESSAGE CAUSES CONSTERNATION AMONG THE DECEPTICONS ASSEMBLED ON AN INACCESSIBLE MOUNTAIN PEAK
THE AUTOBOTS IN ALLIANCE WITH THE INHABITANTS OF EARTH!
WE CANNOT ALLOW THAT, MEGATRON.
WE HAVE ALREADY LEARNED THAT EARTH POSSESSES ABUNDANT FUEL RESOURCES THAT WE CAN EXPLOIT AS WE PREPARE FOR THE CONQUEST OF THIS WORLD
WE MUST DENY THOSE RESOURCES TO OUR ENEMIES! GO FORTH, MY DECEPTICONS! DESTROY THE AUTOBOTS!

THEIR CURIOSITY PIQUED BY THE STRANGE "RITUAL", THE AUTOBOTS MOVE INTO THE DRIVE-IN--
DRIVE-IN
A KISS FOR US
CASHIER
ALL RIGHT, HOW MANY?
C'MON, C'MON! YOU PAY BY THE HEAD, Y'KNOW!
- AND THEY SPEED RIGHT PAST THE STARTLED CASHIER
I'M GONNA BE FIRST TO GREET AN EARTHLING!
BUMBLEBEE! COME BACK! WE MUST RECONNOITRE FIRST!
YOU CAN'T CHECK THE EXUBERANCE OF YOUTH, PROWL!
AND, IN A NEARBY CAR...
HEY, BUSTER! JESSE! COULD YOU TWO DISENGAGE--
- SO I COULD SEE THE MOVIE?
SORRY, "D." HEY!
WHAT TH' HECK
WE'VE BEEN HIT!
CRUMP!
BUMPED FROM BEHIND BY A FENDER-BENDING BEETLE!
DAD'LL KILL ME!
LISTEN, YOU, I--
-- SAY, THAT'S WEIRD! NO ONE'S IN THERE! DID ITS BRAKES SLIP SO THAT IT ROLLED INTO DAD'S CAR?
OR IS THIS SOME KIND OF A JOKE?

BUSTER'S QUESTION GOES UNANSWERED AS--THE DECEPTICONS ATTACK!
EEEEEEE
CRRRRRR
OHMMM!
JUMPIN' JET-FIGHTERS! THIS PLACE HAS JUST BECOME A WAR ZONE!
BUSTER, WE'VE GOT TO GET AWAY FROM HERE!
YOU AND "O" GO FOR HELP, JESS! I-I'VE GOT TO STAY!
HOW COULD I POSSIBLY TELL THEM THAT I THOUGHT I HEARD THIS VOLKSWAGON CRY OUT IN PAIN--AND NO ONE'S INSIDE! I HAVE TO FIND OUT WHAT'S HAPPENING HERE!
THIS IS ALMOST BEYOND BELIEF. THE DECEPTICONS HAVE LAUNCHED AN ASSAULT AND THE EARTH VEHICLES HAVE DONE ABSOLUTELY NOTHING TO DEFEND THEMSELVES. CAN THIS STRANGE RITUAL BE SO OVERWHELMING AN EXPERIENCE THAT IT HAS PUT THE EARTH ROBOTS IN A TRANCE? OR--WAS THE DATA FROM THE ARK WRONG? I MUST PUT MY LOGIC CIRCUITS TO WORK ON THIS.
PROWL, I DON'T INTEND ON SITTIN' HERE ALL DAY BEIN' USED FOR TARGET PRACTICE. I SAY WE MAKE A STAND HERE AND NOW.
I HAD HOPED TO OPTIMUS WE COULD AVOID THIS, BUT...
...IT SEEMS OUR ADVERSARIES HAVE LEFT US LITTLE CHOICE. ASSUME DEFENSIVE CONFIGURATIONS.
NOW YER TALKIN' MY LINGO.

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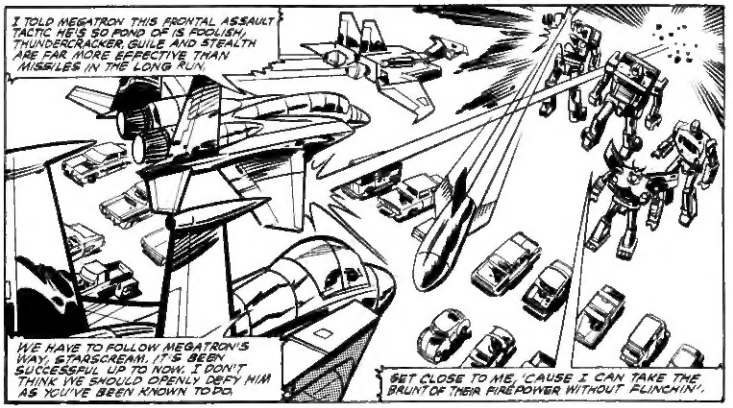
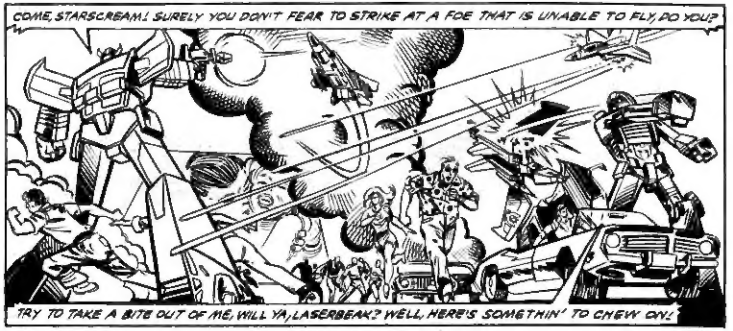
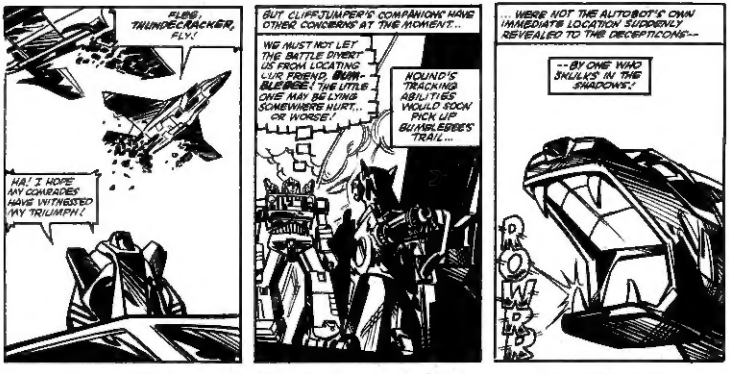
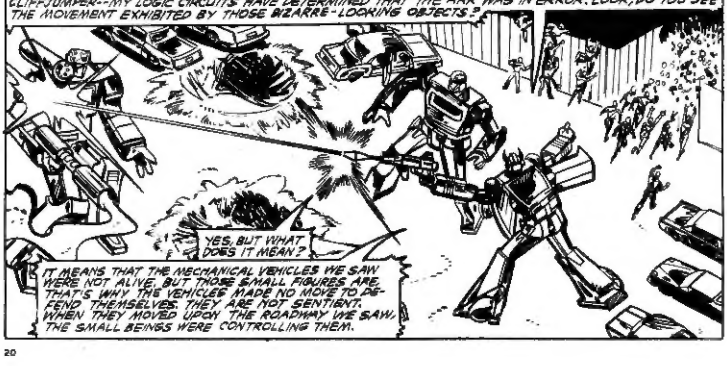

I TOLD MEGATRON THIS FRONTAL ASSAULT TACTIC, HE'S SO FOND OF, IS FOOLISH! THUNDERCRACKER, GUILE AND STEALTH ARE FAR MORE EFFECTIVE THAN MISSILES IN THE LONG RUN.
WE HAVE TO FOLLOW MEGATRON'S WAY, STARSCREAM, IT'S BEEN SUCCESSFUL UP TO NOW. I DON'T THINK WE SHOULD OPENLY DEFY HIM AS YOU'VE BEEN KNOWN TO DO.
GET CLOSE TO ME, 'CAUSE I CAN TAKE THE BRUNT OF THEIR FIREPOWER WITHOUT FLINCHIN'.


COME, STARSCREAM! SURELY YOU DON'T FEAR TO STRIKE AT A FOE THAT IS UNABLE TO FLY, DO YOU?
TRY TO TAKE A BITE OUT OF ME, WILL YA, LASERBEAK? WELL, HERE'S SOMETHIN' TO CHEW ON!

I'LL HOLD MY ATTACK FOR JUST A MOMENT UNTIL THE DECEPTICON SCUM GETS JUST WITHIN RANGE. AND THEN...
THUNDERCRACKER, LOOK! CLIFF JUMPER IS ALONE! SLAY HIM!
SO, STARSCREAM, YOU STRIKE AT ME BECAUSE YOU THINK ISOLATION MAKES ME VULNERABLE?
YOU HAVE OBVIOUSLY NEVER FLOWN IN THE FACE OF MY GLASS-GAS GUN!
YARRSH! THE GAS COATS ME, MAKING MY METAL BRITTLE AND BREAKABLE AS GLASS!


FLEE, THUNDERCRACKER, FLY!
HA! I HOPE MY COMRADES HAVE WITNESSED MY TRIUMPH!
BUT CLIFFJUMPER'S COMPANIONS HAVE OTHER CONCERNS AT THE MOMENT...
WE MUST NOT LET THE BATTLE DIVERT US FROM LOCATING OUR FRIEND, BUMBLEBEE! THE LITTLE ONE MAY BE LYING SOMEWHERE HURT... OR WORSE!
HOUND'S TRACKING ABILITIES WOULD SOON PICK UP BUMBLEBEE'S TRAIL...
...WERE NOT THE AUTOBOT'S OWN IMMEDIATE LOCATION SUDDENLY REVEALED TO THE DECEPTICONS'--
--BY ONE WHO SKULKS IN THE SHADOWS?
POWWW

RAVAGE! FINALLY YOU REVEAL YOURSELF, MASTER SPY. NOW BACK--BACK TO YOUR LEADER, MEGATRON AND TELL HIM WHO DEFEATED YOU THIS DAY.
I CAN IMAGINE RAVAGE'S ANGER WERE HE TO LEARN THAT HE FLED FROM NOTHING--MERE THREE DIMENSIONAL HOLOGRAMS CAST BY MY TURRET GUN.
IT WILL ONLY BE A MATTER OF TIME BEFORE MY CONCUSSION CANNON STRIKES, AND THERE WILL BE TWO LESS AUTOBOTS CLANKING AROUND.


CLIFFJUMPER--MY LOGIC CIRCUITS HAVE DETERMINED THAT THE ARK WAS IN ERROR. LOOK, DO YOU SEE THE MOVEMENT EXHIBITED BY THOSE BIZARRE-LOOKING OBJECTS?
YES, BUT WHAT DOES IT MEAN?
IT MEANS THAT THE MECHANICAL VEHICLES WE SAW WERE NOT ALIVE, BUT THOSE SMALL FIGURES ARE. THAT'S WHY THE VEHICLES MADE NO MOVE TO DEFEND THEMSELVES. THEY ARE NOT SENTIENT. WHEN THEY MOVED UPON THE ROADWAY WE SAW, THE SMALL BEINGS WERE CONTROLLING THEM.

WHAT WE ARE SEEING IS NON-MACHINE LIFE, AS HARD AS THAT MAY BE TO ACCEPT, THAT IS THE ONLY LOGICAL EXPLANATION.
OBVIOUSLY, THIS CHANGES THINGS CONSIDERABLY. WHAT SHOULD WE DO NEXT,?
NEXT, WE REPORT OUR FINDINGS TO OPTIMUS PRIME... HOW SUCH RADIO-WAVES CAN BE MONITORED.
ONLY HE POSSESSES THE WISDOM WE NEED TO DEAL WITH THESE NEW CONTINGENCIES.
FOLLOW ME TO THE ARK, AUTOBOTS.
BUT WHAT OF OUR SMALL FRIEND, BUMBLEBEE.?
PERHAPS HE WAS NOT INJURED TOO BADLY AND HAS ALREADY LEFT. IN ANY CASE, WE MUST LEAVE IMMEDIATELY, AND DRAW THE DECEPTICONS' FIRE, BECAUSE THESE NON-MECHANICAL LIFE-FORMS DO NOT APPEAR CAPABLE OF DEFENDING THEMSELVES.
AND, NOT FAR AWAY,,,
THE NOISES COMING FROM THIS CAR ARE REALLY WEIRD!
ALMOST LIKE... CRYING!
IT'S BEEN BADLY DAMAGED!--LEAKING SOMETHING THAT LOOKS LIKE ... BUT ISN'T... OIL!
AND I HAVEN'T GOT THE SLIGHTEST IDEA WHAT TO DO FOR IT! I'M NO MECHANIC! THAT'S DAD'S FIELD! DAD?
SAY! IF I CAN GET THIS BUG TO HIS GARAGE, HE'LL KNOW HOW TO PATCH IT UP!
AND SO, BUSTER WITWICKY CLIMBS BEHIND BUMBLEBEE'S WHEEL, ONLY TO DISCOVER...
NO KEY! NO IGNITION! NO GAS PEDAL! HOW DOES THIS CAR START?!
VROOM
ALL BY ITSELF?!
IT'S MOVING OUT--SLOWLY, SLUGGISHLY! IT SEEMS LIKE ALL I'M DOING IS GUIDING IT AWAY...

...FROM THE BATTLEFIELD! HOLY SMOKES, AM I DREAMING, OR DID THOSE BIG ROBOTS WHO WERE FIGHTING THE PLANES JUST CHANGE...
...INTO CARS?!!
BUSTER GETS NO CHANCE, HOWEVER, TO FURTHER OBSERVE THE AUTOBOTS' ESCAPE...
...FOR, SUBJECT ONLY TO HIS STEERING IT WHERE HE WANTS IT TO GO, THE YELLOW VOLKSWAGEN WHISKS HIM AWAY!
LATER THAT NIGHT...
BANG CLANG
WHAT THE DELUGE--?!
SOMEBODY'S MESSIN' AROUND IN MY GARAGE!
WHAT'S THAT? OIL?
BUSTER? THAT YOU, SON? WHAT THE DEVIL...?!
DAD, LISTEN...!
HEYYYY! DON'T TELL ME!
AFTER ALL MY YEARS OF TRYIN' TO GET YA 'T' PUT DOWN THE POETRY AN' PICK UP A MONKEY WRENCH, IT LOOKS LIKE YA FINALLY TOOK YOUR OLD DADS ADVICE! FIXIN' CARS ON THE SIDE, ARE YA?
DAD, I CAN EXPLAIN...
NO NEED TO EXPLAIN, SON! MY SHOP'S YOUR SHOP! USE IT ANY TIME YA WANT!
BUT I JUST WANT YA T'KNOW, SON, THAT I'M PROUD OF YA-- RIGHT PROUD!
DAD, I WOULDN'T KNOW HOW TO FIX A CAR IF I TRIED! THAT'S WHY I BROUGHT THIS ONE TO YOU! ONLY... IT'S NOT A CAR!
IT'S GOT WHEELS, BOY, AND FENDERS! HEADLIGHTS, TOO! JUST WHAT WOULD YOU CALL IT?
A-ALIVE?!
HELP ME, PLEASE! I'M DYING!
NEXT
HEY, BUDDY, CAN YA SPARE SOME FUEL?